

From: [Marconi Campos Cerqueira](#)
To: [Bourhan Yassin](#)
Subject: Resignation
Date: Monday, March 18, 2024 3:53:07 PM

Dear Bourhan,

With a heavy heart, I compose this message to you, recognizing the depth of our professional and personal relationship. However, circumstances have compelled me to take this step.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to you for your inspirational leadership and guidance over the past four years. Thanks to your unwavering support along with our leadership team's exceptional dedication, I successfully cultivated a formidable science team within our organization, firmly placing science at the forefront of our decision-making processes. This is something that I am incredibly proud of, and it has all been made possible by your and our leadership team's support and guidance.

Through collective efforts, our science team has played a pivotal role in promoting and advancing diverse conservation initiatives in over 80 projects with goals ranging from spearheading the creation of protected areas to enhancing the management of endangered species and facilitating forest restoration efforts. During my time at RFCx, the Science Team successfully published over ten peer-reviewed papers in prestigious scientific journals, underscoring the undeniable impact of our organization's efforts and initiatives. These publications not only demonstrated the efficacy of Ecoacoustics but also provided compelling scientific evidence of its instrumental role in enhancing biodiversity protection and facilitating conservation efforts. Our work has propelled Arbimon to the forefront of ecoacoustic studies; Arbimon is now the largest repository of soundscape recordings, spanning 120 countries with over 4,000 species detected. We've developed more than 14 regional AI models for species identification in the last three years, solidifying Arbimon's position as a critical reference in bioacoustic analysis. Through our hard work we have established Arbimon as a renowned engine for harnessing the power of AI and sound to improve biodiversity monitoring and conservation.

Despite all these accomplishments and our dedication to science and conservation, it is with deep regret that I, along with my committed team comprised of Kris Harmon, Gabriel Leite, Tomaz Melo, Guilherme de Melo, Jose Wagner, Thiago Bicudo, Nelson Buainain, and Claydson Assis must tender our resignations from Rainforest Connection effective March 31. This decision weighs heavily upon us, but it is fueled by a profound commitment to advance biodiversity conservation and our need to uphold the integrity of our scientific pursuits.

The ongoing association of our hard work and accomplishments with RFCx board members attempting to leverage organizational successes for personal gain has repeatedly compromised our scientific standing and casts a shadow over our collective efforts. **This situation has trampled the morale of our team and eroded our confidence in the organization's direction. Additionally, the gross minimization by the RFCx board of the data corruption incident, and subsequent inaction on an issue which still disrupts our project workflow and severely impacted our mental and emotional well-being, has jeopardized our reputation with partners and the Arbimon community.** This situation has created a deep sense of uncertainty, vulnerability, and abandonment in our team.



Arbimon and its vibrant community represent the culmination of my professional life's work, with the platform originating as a project at the University of Puerto Rico under Mitch Aide's vision and leadership while I was a graduate student in his lab. Since its establishment, Arbimon has been enriched by the dedicated contributions of numerous students, colleagues, and researchers. I have directly spent 12 years contributing to the evolution it has experienced. Arbimon now serves a diverse community of over 4,000 users, including researchers, students, and conservationists; it contains the largest repository of raw soundscape recordings in the world, and has contributed to hundreds of projects and scientific studies. My departure from Arbimon's path, especially now at the moment of launch of the newest iteration, causes me unimaginable pain and anguish, **but operating in an environment where my work and reputation, along with those of my team, are constantly at stake and where our efforts are marginalized and undervalued has become untenable.**

Furthermore, despite the Science Team's unwavering dedication, significant achievements, countless sacrifices, and steadfast commitment to our work, mission, and vision, I still feel we are underrepresented and unsupported by the current board, and it is disheartening to observe that some members of the board seem not to recognize the value we bring to the organization. To the contrary, there has been an unjust portrayal of dishonesty and a questioning of personal integrity directed towards me. In addition to feeling undervalued and overlooked, my scarce communications with the board have left in me a sense of intimidation and even discrimination. These actions are perplexing, given my extreme dedication to advancing our conservation mission and vision as the Chief Scientist of Rainforest Connection, where every endeavor has been aimed at advancing acoustic monitoring to improve biodiversity conservation. Such treatment starkly contradicts the values we claim to uphold.

Our departure marks the end of a significant chapter characterized by shared projects and cherished relationships. We will genuinely miss the mutual support and remarkable sense of unity that we've cultivated within the day-to-day operations of RFCx while collaborating on something truly extraordinary.

Despite bidding farewell, our commitment to our external partners and to facilitating a seamless transition remains unwavering. Should the organization require it, we stand ready to lend our assistance in concluding any remaining work or ongoing projects. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me should there be specific tasks for which our expertise or support could be of value during this transition period.

With heavy hearts,

Marconi Campos Cerqueira, Chief Scientist
 Kristopher Harmon, Science Projects Strategist
 Gabriel Leite, Biodiversity Science Lead
 Tomaz Melo, Biodiversity Scientist
 Guilherme de Melo, Biodiversity Scientist
 José Wagner Ribeiro Jr, Quantitative Ecology Lead
 Thiago Bicudo, Quantitative Ecologist
 Nelson Buainain, Data Science Lead
 Claydson Assis, Data Scientist

From: [Chrissy Durkin](#)
To: [Bourhan Yassin](#)
Cc: [Rob Conant](#); [David Klein](#)
Subject: Resignation
Date: Tuesday, March 12, 2024 6:18:21 PM

Bourhan,

I am writing to formally tender my resignation from Rainforest Connection, effective immediately. I am proud of the impact I have accomplished alongside you, Mahreen, Marconi, Ant, Lawrence, Molly, Stas, and their respective teams, and it has been a privilege to collaborate with such brilliant, kind, and motivated individuals - I respect each of them and hold them in the highest regard. I will so dearly miss the closeness, trust, camaraderie, and incredible sense of community I have felt working with each of you building something truly special. I sincerely hope the board is able to find a path forward in service of the work, projects, and the Arbimon community that we have pioneered together.

It is important to clarify that my resignation is to disassociate myself from Topher White and the board of Rainforest Connection that has been silent through our most trying times. Throughout my tenure, the Rainforest Connection board has been absent and failed to take necessary action to protect the organization. Topher White has committed a clear pattern of misdeeds that the board continues to turn a blind eye to, and recent events have only further enabled the continuation of self-serving and unethical behavior that has been placated and validated by the board.

I see no viable path forward as this is no longer a safe or healthy working environment. The recent news I received from verified sources that Topher is actively bashing RFCx and recent misrepresentations of RFCx by Topher were the final straw for me. I also learned about Topher's new desire to launch a consumer product through RFCx that he first tried launching under his own private company. Not only does that undermine our scientific credibility but it shows how he continuously undermines our efforts and is operating only for his own personal interests. I believe that for success in our space, leadership needs to be diverse, driven, ethical, and action-oriented, and I believe the current board has proven to be uninterested or unfit.

To reiterate, I sing nothing but praises for the team giving their lives for the mission we all believe in. You, of course, always have a direct line to me, but I request not to be contacted by any members of the board of Rainforest Connection.

Sincerely,

Chrissy Durkin

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Chrissy Durkin | [RFCx](#)
VP - Growth & Impact
chrissy@rfcx.org | +1 512 638 1886
Austin, TX, US



From: [Molly Webster](#)
To: [Bourhan Yassin](#)
Cc: [Molly Webster](#)
Subject: Molly Webster resignation notice
Date: Friday, July 5, 2024 3:46:30 PM

Dear Bourhan,

Given the current situation with the Board of Directors and their actions that are not in the best interest of the organization or its people, I feel compelled to submit my formal resignation, effective end of business day, July 5, 2024. I want it to be clear that I feel this is something I am forced to do due to the recent circumstances, not something I'd otherwise choose.

Over the past three-plus years, I have dedicated myself to building our Marketing Department and the two brands, Rainforest Connection and Arbimon, which have become recognized international successes. Many of us have worked tirelessly for this organization, I for one at well below fair market value for comparable positions and my experience level, and with no healthcare or 401(k) benefits. I continued because I believed in our team and the mission to better protect our earth for ourselves and future generations.

We had our best year in 2023 and were poised for amazing work and exciting projects in 2024. Over the past three years, especially in 2023, we were featured in major stories in internationally recognized news outlets. We were invited to speak at notable conferences and summits worldwide, to the point we had to start declining offers due to bandwidth. We were featured on TV shows, most notably "Earthsounds," which currently streams on Apple TV+ and was among the top 15 shows to watch for months—a project two years in the making.

My team and I not only managed and built up the awareness and presence of two brands simultaneously, but I also led an entire rebrand initiative for Arbimon and Rainforest Connection. Arbimon was once a single, outdated webpage using an outdated design system from Rainforest Connection. It now has its own logo, a modern brand system, a sleek corporate website, and a new platform full of features to showcase our work and support the mission of advancing ecoacoustic analysis for biodiversity monitoring.

However, I no longer feel comfortable continuing in my role as the current situation has made it impossible to perform my duties effectively. The ongoing chaos and our constant efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of the board's decisions have taken a toll on my mental health, as I believe it has for the rest of the team.

It is incredibly painful that our organization's imminent demise is solely due to the rash actions and subsequent neglect of the board. We've been effectively knee-capped, and most of the 36-member team will have resigned by the time I've sent this, strictly due to these reasons.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to you for always championing the hardworking individuals in our organization. I leave with deep appreciation and gratitude for you and our team.

Regretfully,
Molly Webster

Molly Webster

Director of Marketing

San Francisco, CA

[RFCx.org](#) | [Arbimon.org](#)

From: [Mahreen Qazi](#)
To: [Bourhan Yassin](#)
Subject: Mahreen Resignation
Date: Friday, July 5, 2024 9:41:08 AM

Hi Bourhan

I am resigning from my position as the VP – Strategy & Operations for Rainforest Connection, effective immediately.

Rainforest Connection no longer represents the values that I hold dear. Therefore, I do not wish to be contacted by anyone at Rainforest Connection ever again.

Mahreen

From: [Bourhan Yassin](#)
To: [Rob Conant](#)
Subject: Fwd: Letter of Resignation
Date: Friday, July 5, 2024 3:46:26 PM

Hi Rob,

Please find below Shay (CEO Office) resignation.

Thanks,
B

Bourhan Yassin
Chief Executive Officer
www.rfcx.org
+1 (415) 792 - 9472



----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Mahreen Qazi** <mahreen@rfcx.org>
Date: Fri, Jul 5, 2024 at 12:10 PM
Subject: Fwd: Letter of Resignation
To: Bourhan Yassin <bourhan@rfcx.org>

Hi Bourhan
Please find below the resignation of the CEO's Office support.
Thanks
Mahreen

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Shayan Azhar** <shayan@rfcx.org>
Date: Fri, Jul 5, 2024 at 10:06 PM
Subject: Letter of Resignation
To: Mahreen Qazi <mahreen@rfcx.org>

Dear Mahreen,

I'm writing to formally hand in my resignation.
Over the course of the year I've been with Rainforest Connection, I'm delighted to have contributed and supported the amazing work that the team has been doing. However in the past 6 months, I've witnessed alarming changes brought on by the board of the organization and the misalignment and mistrust for the leadership team. In what I've seen, I cannot stand in good faith and say that the values of the board and its decisions are aligned with mine. For this reason, I've decided to step away as I am not comfortable being in an organization where the mission has been derailed so greatly for the sake of power and control. In fact that is the exact

environment I was hoping to step away from in joining Rainforest. It is an unfortunate circumstance, and I hope the board and leadership find their way back to the purpose and mission of conservation once again. I continue to admire and respect the leadership team greatly and hope the very best for them.

I will do a complete handover and transfer ownership of any relevant documents, comms, and accounts today so no further communications with me are necessary.

--

Shayan Azhar

CEO's Office

+971 58 995 4632

Dubai, UAE

[RFCx.org](https://rfcx.org) | [Arbimon.org](https://arbimon.org)



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Mahreen Qazi

VP - Strategy & Operations

Mobile #: +971 50 2660026

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

www.rfcx.org | www.arbimon.org



From: [Bourhan Yassin](#)
To: [Rob Conant](#)
Subject: Fwd: Resignation Letter
Date: Friday, July 5, 2024 3:46:26 PM
Attachments: [Khalil Ghazzawi Resignation Letter.pdf](#)

Hi Rob,

Please find below Dr. Khalil (Our Finance Manager) resignation.

Bourhan

Bourhan Yassin
Chief Executive Officer
www.rfcx.org
+1 (415) 792 - 9472



----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Mahreen Qazi** <mahreen@rfcx.org>
Date: Fri, Jul 5, 2024 at 10:49 AM
Subject: Fwd: Resignation Letter
To: Bourhan Yassin <bourhan@rfcx.org>

Hi Bourhan

Please find below the resignation letter from the finance manager of RFCx.

Thanks

Mahreen

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Khalil Ghazzawi** <khalil@rfcx.org>
Date: Fri, Jul 5, 2024 at 7:43 PM
Subject: Resignation Letter
To: Mahreen Qazi <mahreen@rfcx.org>

Dear Mahreen,

Effective immediately I resign from my responsibility as finance manager. I don't want to be associated with Rainforest Connection anymore. Please do not contact me again.

Thank you.

Khalil Ghazzawi

5-July-2024

Khalil Ghazzawi
Finance manager

www.rfcx.org

Mobile: +961-3-366775



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Mahreen Qazi

VP - Strategy & Operations

Mobile #: +971 50 2660026

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

www.rfcx.org | www.arbimon.org



From: [Molly Webster](#)
To: [Bourhan Yassin](#)
Subject: Fwd: Resigning from Rainforest Connection
Date: Friday, June 21, 2024 4:50:24 PM

Such a loss. Shame on the board.

Molly Webster

Director of Marketing

San Francisco, CA

[RFCx.org](#) | [Arbimon.org](#)



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Ashlee Taylor <ashlee@rfcx.org>
Date: Fri, Jun 21, 2024 at 1:25 PM
Subject: Resigning from Rainforest Connection
To: Molly Webster <molly@rfcx.org>

Dear Molly,

I'm emailing to inform you of my resignation from Rainforest Connection. This is to be effective June 30th. I deeply appreciate and am happy with your support and all the amazing work Rainforest Connection has accomplished in my time here. I was thrilled to be just a small part of it within the Marketing Department. Unfortunately, due to the actions of Rainforest Connection's board and founder, my ability to utilize and propel my skills for the greater good of our planet have been stifled here in recent months. I truly wish everyone the best. Hoping the mission of creating a better world for all is taken to heart by those on the board who have ultimate control over the future of Rainforest Connection.

Take care,

Ashlee

Ashlee Taylor

Marketing Coordinator

Gilbert, AZ

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